

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CELEBRATING THE 100TH
BIRTHDAY OF NANCY IRISH

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I would like to wish a happy birthday to Nancy Irish of Stafford Springs, CT. Nancy will be celebrating her 100th birthday on May 9. While the birthday itself is, of course, worthy of much celebration, those who know Nancy well—her friends, relatives, coworkers and neighbors—would all tell you that Nancy deserves the most congratulations for the life she has led over the past 100 years.

Born May 9, 1906, to Italian immigrant parents, Nancy lived in New York until she and her family moved to Massachusetts when she was a teenager. On July 12, 1924, she married Daniel Woods Irish, and together they moved to Connecticut. They had three children, Daniel, Darian, and Dolores. When her husband Daniel tragically passed away early, Nancy worked very hard to provide for her family. Throughout her life, she held a variety of jobs, including working in the Tobacco Valley cigar industry and, at one time, running a taxi business and a rooming house. After years of hard work, Nancy retired to Florida for over 20 years before moving back to Connecticut. She is currently enjoying a well-deserved retirement and loves spending time with her family, including two surviving children, five grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and a great-great-grandson.

Nancy Irish has lived a long, remarkable life and has touched many people's lives. If you consider the strength, determination, and hard work she has demonstrated throughout her life, can it really be any shock that she has lived such a long, fulfilling life? Happy birthday, Nancy Irish. May your 100th year be your best yet. •

CELEBRATION OF NAVY WEEK

• Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Illinois celebration of "Navy Week," which will occur this year during the week of May 15, 2006. This celebration recognizes the men and women who have served and sacrificed on behalf of this country both at home and abroad.

The strength and bravery of the U.S. Navy played an integral role in the creation and development of the United States during its struggle for freedom and American sovereignty. Many brave Illinois citizens have served and continue to serve honorably in the U.S. Navy.

There are more than 350,000 active duty and more than 135,000 Ready Reserve Navy personnel in the U.S. Navy, serving the Nation in support and defense of the values and freedom that all people in the United States cherish.

This week, members of the Navy in Illinois will spend time serving their country and community in other ways.

The Navy band will perform in city parks throughout Chicago, and Navy personnel will work at food banks and travel to the Great Lakes Veterans Hospital to support those who are a part of the great history of the U.S. Navy.

In addition, the Navy will participate in Habitat for Humanity, building houses around Illinois, and they will work with the Chicago Christian Industrial League to help the homeless of Chicago and those suffering from substance abuse.

Recognizing "Navy Week" will allow us to celebrate the strength and bravery displayed by members and veterans of the U.S. Navy and the role they have played throughout our history. •

CONGRATULATING JOHN FALES

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Mr. John Fales for receiving the American Legion National Commander's Public Relations Award for 2006. John has a long and distinguished military career and has continued his service to this great Nation as an unwavering supporter of veterans as a journalist and advocate.

During his military career, John served more than 27 years on active duty for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. He is highly decorated with awards including the Purple Heart, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Service Medal, New York State Conspicuous Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Action Ribbon, and South Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He earned these decorations as he defended our Nation's freedoms and liberties.

Today, John helps our veterans access care and benefits. To the many readers of his column, he is known as Sergeant Shaft, the witty newspaper columnist that provides information affecting the veterans' community. His column helps veterans and their families navigate the highly complicated VA system to obtain the care and benefits they have earned through their service. John is also the president of the Blinded American Veterans Foundation which advocates for sensory disabled veterans and provides outreach efforts to ensure sensory disabled veterans are able to lead productive lives.

John Fales's service and patriotism are beyond question. He is a deserving recipient of the American Legion National Commander's Public Relations Award for 2006. Once again, I congratulate John for his commendation. •

EMMANUEL OFOSU YEBOAH'S
DISABILITIES LEADERSHIP

• Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and congratulate Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah for his leadership and dedication to raising awareness about disabilities around the world.

Emmanuel was born without a tibia in his right leg, leaving it useless and

severely deformed. This would have been an enormous obstacle for anyone in our society to overcome. But he was not born here—he was born in Ghana, where historically the disabled were often poisoned or left to die. At the time, it was believed that a child was born disabled due to a sin the mother had committed. Because of his son's deformed leg, Emmanuel's father abandoned his family, and his mother's friends encouraged her to kill or, at the very least, abandon her disabled son.

Instead, she chose to nurture and encourage him, making the radical decision to send him to primary school, rather than sending him to the streets as a beggar.

Unfortunately, his mother died when he was 13, and Emmanuel was forced to drop out of school. His only option for survival was to shine shoes for a living—earning the equivalent of only 2 dollars a day.

Despite his struggle, Emmanuel's story is a successful one. He refused to resort to begging, and instead chose to focus the attention of his countrymen on the issue of discrimination of the disabled in Ghana. His method: biking across Ghana—with one leg. The only problem was that he didn't own a bicycle.

After seeking support from the Challenged Athlete Foundation in the United States in 2002, Emmanuel began his journey through Ghana, garnering media attention with every mile. By the time he reached his destination, Emmanuel was a national hero.

After 2003, when he competed in a triathlon, riding a 56-mile bike segment as part of a relay team, he was given a whole new life. Doctors were able to free him from his crutches by partially amputating his leg and applying a prosthetic one.

Emmanuel has since dedicated his life to improving the lives of Ghana's many disabled citizens. In conjunction with the Free Wheelchair Mission, Emmanuel has helped provide free wheelchairs to disabled people around the world. He has started a cycling team, a wheelchair basketball team, and a running team for physically challenged athletes, and is currently working on starting a sports academy for disabled athletes in Ghana.

Today, of the 20 million people living in Ghana, 2 million are disabled. Thanks to the efforts of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah, Ghanaians with physical disabilities are living their lives with purpose, dignity, and value. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United